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AUTHOR Christopher, Craig; Lawhead, Jeanie
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ABSTRACT

This final report of Colorado's Project ACCESS, a coordinated system of information linking local and regional school districts with major resources, describes the development of the project during each of its 5 years, including project activities, education agency development, publications developed, staff assignments and training, and project operation. The report outlines the dissemination program upon project completion as compared to state education agency activities and resources prior to the project's implementation. Also discussed are the institutionalization of the project, case studies of the impact of the program on the decision-making process, and a description of the manner in which the project approached equity issues. Finally, the report describes the characteristics essential to developing a strong and effective dissemination system. An appendix presents tables of decision impacts, areas impacted by decisions, and case study results.
(Author/RAA)

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DISSEMINATION CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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FINAL REPORT
PROJECT ACCESS

Prepared by:
Craig Christopher
Jeanie Layhead

Colorado Department of Education
January, 1982

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Colorado Center for Educational Assistance

ABSTRACT

PROJECT ACCESS

Prior to Project ACCESS, Colorado had no coordinated system of disseminating resource information to Colorado school personnel at the regional or district level. Various groups/agencies were offering limited resource sharing services, but no one agency had taken a leadership role in coordinating dissemination activities. Project ACCESS, during its five years of operation, was able to develop a coordinated system of information sharing linking school districts (local and regional) with major resource systems. This final report describes the development of the project during each of the five years, including activities of the project, education agency involvement, publications developed, staff assignments and training, and project operation. The report outlines the dissemination program upon project completion as compared to SEA activities and resources prior to Project ACCESS implementation. Also discussed are the "institutionalizing" of Project ACCESS, case studies of the impact of the program on the improvement of decision-making process and a description of the manner in which the project approached equity issues. Finally, this report describes some characteristics essential to developing a strong, effective dissemination system. The specific topics covered in this report include;

- Description of the major components and activities of the project
- Comparison between the dissemination program upon project completion and the SEA activities and resources prior to the program
- The degree to which the dissemination program has become institutionalized
- Description of the way in which the project has approached equity issues
- Impact of the program on improvement of practice at various levels on the educational decision-making process
- What we have learned about dissemination

Project ACCESS, which began its operation in 1976 as a part of the Office of Program Development within the Colorado Department of Education, has evolved into the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance within the Community Based Education Services Unit.

Still providing resource sharing and information dissemination and technical assistance to the school districts (local and regional) of Colorado, the Center is in the process of further defining its role and expanding its service to its clients.

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PROJECT ACCESS

A. Description of the Major Components and Activities of the Project

Year One, 1976-77

- A full time director and a half-time information specialist were hired
- Project ACCESS staff was housed in the Office of Program Development within the Colorado Department of Education (CDE)
- Project ACCESS operated as a linker between school districts in four regional pilot sites and three major resource systems, including ERIC, the Colorado State Facilitator, and the CDE Talent Bank. The pilot sites included three Boards of Cooperative Services and the Denver Public Schools
- Subcontracted with Northern Colorado BOCS to provide ERIC searches and information packages to the four sites
- Dissemination Advisory Council was formed which was composed of CDE unit directors, two assistant commissioners, superintendents from the pilot districts and the BOCS pilot sites
- Seven specific purposes of Project ACCESS were identified
- The ultimate scope of Project ACCESS services was determined by the State Board of Education to be a state-wide program
- The four regional pilot sites provided a base for field test training of linkers
- A five year plan was developed with two major components: (1) expansion of pilot sites and (2) development of a dissemination center
- Linkage agents identified local needs through an eight step process
- A Resource Guide to Educational Services in Colorado was organized and published to aid the Field Agents
- Information was made available to Field Agents regarding promising educational programs and linking practices and promises
- The Dissemination Advisory Council met four times to discuss philosophy, goals, awareness, and information
- Established linkages between CDE programs and the field agents
- Training programs were designed to train Field Agents in their roles

- Projector Director participated with several national committees to review programs for minorities and women in research and review of the NIE dissemination strategies
- Program was evaluated and an evaluation design for the future was developed.

Year Two, 1977-78

- A resource specialist was hired
- A contract for computer searches was written with San Mateo Educational Resource Center
- The Dissemination Advisory Council selected four new BOCS sites for inclusion in the linkage network
- Renewed the contract with the Colorado University project evaluator
- Researched, designed, and wrote two resource information packets on Competency Based Education and Program/Product Evaluation
- Provided linker consulting training
- Provided on-site visits to Project ACCESS sites to assist in program implementation
- Began preliminary meetings to discuss the plan for the Educational Resource Center
- Prepared files of resource information on "hot" educational topics
- Participated in the NTS Dissemination Leadership conference and the Northwest Lab Advisory Council
- Coordinated the dissemination of health curriculum materials with the State Health Consortium
- Resource specialist was appointed to the CDE Basic Skills Task Force
- Visited Illinois Department of Education Dissemination and Resources Network to examine their model for developing a state resource file
- Conducted a Field Agent meeting to provide training on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model
- Prepared a public testimony for State Senate Education Committee on how to improve dissemination to teachers
- Director was appointed chairman of a CDE committee to analyze current dissemination activities carried out by various programs
- Met with linker/trainers from Northwest Lab to plan a training session on consultation skills

- Developed a questionnaire to analyze current perceptions of the importance of various dissemination activities carried out by CDE
- Met with State Library and HEW Region VIII to discuss the Educational Resource Center plan
- Researched, designed, and published a document titled: Curriculum Improvement in Small Rural Schools
- Conducted internal dissemination analysis
- Presented evaluation information to the State Board of Education

Year Three, 1978-79

- Training workshops were held with the Field Agents and the regional library systems directors
- Established the evaluation plan with the Planning and Evaluation Unit of the Colorado Department of Education
- Developed a chart of Project ACCESS field operations and types of training conducted
- Five new sites were added to the Project ACCESS network
- The National Testing Service staff conducted an onsite evaluation
- A resource specialist was hired through the CDE Nutrition Unit to identify nutrition education documents to be included in the State Library Resource file
- PETC III (Preparing Educational Training Consultants) training took place for Field Agents and ACCESS staff
- A Project ACCESS Field Agent received full funding from the school districts served by a BOCS (Weld County BOCES)
- CDE Basic Skills consultant responsibilities transferred to the Project ACCESS staff
- Diane Wilson resigned as Director of Project ACCESS to assume a position in Seattle, Washington
- Cheryl Chase was appointed Director of Project ACCESS
- A three year Project ACCESS plan was designed by staff and approved by the Assistant Commissioners, Commissioner, and the Dissemination Advisory Council
- Resource Specialist was hired to replace Cheryl Chase

- Project ACCESS staff assisted with the Colorado Title II proposal and plan
- Completed a matrix which showed the CDE basic skills programs and the Colorado schools in which they work
- Completed third year evaluation

Year Four, 1979-80.

- Planning sessions were conducted with accountability/accreditation staff, ACCESS Field Agents, regional field coordinators, and the Assistant Commissioners for Field Services and Program Development. The purpose of these sessions was to identify roles and responsibilities of each in support of the accountability process
- Conducted a conference with ACCESS Field Agents and accountability/accreditation staff to acquaint Field Agents with the new role in accountability
- Created an awareness of accountability/accreditation process to BOCES directors and school district superintendents
- Secured commitment from BOCES directors and Field Agents to attend four resources identification training sessions
- Conducted the first resource identification workshop on discipline in collaboration with McREL
- Identified future topics for remaining workshops
- Two new sites added to the ACCESS network
- Field Agent and gatekeeper training provided to new sites
- Developed procedures for organizing human and material resources
- Inserviced teachers on promising practices in the teaching of mathematics
- Assisted with the development of a K-11 language arts curriculum guide for a small Colorado school district
- Assisted with an awareness conference which featured National Diffusion Network projects in the areas of reading, mathematics and language arts
- Assisted in coordinating activities with the National Inservice Network for staff development purposes
- Prepared proposed CDE policy statement concerning the collection of human and material resources and the delivery of resources through ACCESS Field Agents

- Formalized operational procedures for Field Agents within the accountability/process
- Completed and communicated district priorities to Field Agents
- Field tested the process with new ACCESS Field Agent involvement
- Provided two-day workshop for ACCESS Field Agents on Sex Equity/Title IX
- Conducted second resource identification workshop with assistance from McREL on alternatives to standardized testing
- Planned for remaining resource identification/skill enhancement workshops with McREL
- Nutrition education materials became available through Project ACCESS and CENTRE
- Laid groundwork for expansion to one new site
- Secured a performance contract with the Colorado State Library
- Conducted search for Assistant Commissioner for management services on declining resources
- Coordinated activities with Title II - Basic Skills program director
- Robert Ewy was appointed as Supervisor for Project ACCESS
- Visitations to project Field Agents to discuss successes and needs for next year
- Collected input from Field Agents related to the fifth year funding proposal by Field Agent review of the work plan
- Developed proposal for the new ACCESS State Resource and Technical Assistance Center and submitted it to the CDE Commissioner
- Received approval for implementing the new ACCESS Center plan as proposed
- Developed implementation plans for resource and technical assistance delivery for the new ACCESS Center
- Developed material resource packets based on frequently occurring requested topics assessed from Field Agent case documentation
- Organized the new ACCESS Center material resource library for easy distribution to Field Agents and other clients
- Provided inservice for the new ACCESS Center staff on the ACCESS resource and dissemination capacity building concept and specific operational procedures

- Provided inservice for the ACCESS Field Agents about the new ACCESS Center and the expanded material resource base
- Provided inservice for the ACCESS Center staff and Field Agents on the use of the computerized CENTRE resource materials file
- Developed and enhanced retrieval skills by staff and Field Agents of all Colorado State Library resources

Year Five, 1980-81

- Officially became the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance
- Defined minimum performance standards for Field Agents
- Provided inservice training of Field Agents to upgrade skills to minimum performance standards
- Provided Field Agents with resource identification and skill enhancement workshops
- Created a newsletter for Field Agents identifying new human and material resources
- Attended State Accountability conference and made presentation describing the services the new Center could provide
- Met periodically with Accountability/Accreditation staff to discuss ACCESS/Center involvement in the accountability process
- Provided awareness of ACCESS/Center involvement at accountability meetings
- Identified specific needs of school improvement teams
- Trained Field Agents to facilitate the needs of the school improvement teams
- Developed a policy on the development and utilization of human and material resources.
- Provided inservice to regional library searchers on resource identification and retrieval.
- Attended regional library meetings
- Provided awareness workshops to 17 Boards of Cooperative Services on resource identification, utilization, and the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance
- Strengthened the network of rural education resources and established a relationship with the Rural Education Center at Colorado State University

- Designed a brochure explaining the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance and the services provided.
- Presented awareness workshops at regional superintendents meetings
- Coordinated in joint planning and supervision with the CETA staff at the Department
- Assessed the Center's materials/resources as they related to CETA clients
- Developed a needs assessment to determine the direction in the acquisition or purchase of career resource materials for high risk or disadvantaged youth populations in Colorado
- Developed a "mini-resource center" proposal and presented it to the Colorado Employment and Training Council's Youth Committee
- Developed a slide/tape presentation promoting the Center and its services
- Reached agreement with the Mountain Bell Telephone Company to disseminate educational aides and films
- Reached agreement with the Mountain Bell Telephone Company to coordinate its Speaker's Bureau
- Prepared and submitted a proposal to NIE for support of a project to improve educational practices in rural isolated school districts
- Presented at the National Mid-Year Conference for the American Society for Information Science
- Reached agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield to disseminate the film series, "Fit To Be You"
- Prepared and submitted a proposal designed to assist the Departments of Education, Higher Education, Institutions, Labor and Employment, and Social Services with their efforts to assist youth with the transition from school to work

B. Comparison Between the Dissemination Program Upon Project Completion and the SEA Activities and Resources Prior to the Program

RESOURCES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

Performed educational information searches in-house at the Colorado

AFTER FY 1981

Have an independent contract with Bibliographic Retrieval Services

RESOURCES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

State Library

Limited funding formula for the
Regional Library Services Systems.

No state coordination for the
agencies involved in educational
computer searching.

Educational information searches
were performed in-house by hand at
the Southeast Metropolitan Board of
Cooperative Services (SEMBCS).

AFTER FY 1981

for educational computer
searches. This service has
proven to be more efficient
and very cost effective.

The Colorado State Legislature
raised the funding formula for
the Regional Library Services
Systems primarily due to the
volume of Project ACCESS inter-
library loans which were gener-
ated by searches.

Colorado State Library has
assumed the responsibility to
coordinate the state searcher's
network. CSL has provided both
training and continuing educa-
tion to the Colorado searchers.

SEMBCS purchased a terminal and
trained its professionals to
search. This occurred after
the second year SEMBCS was part
of Project ACCESS.

RESOURCES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

No subcontracting with Business and Industry to promote and provide the dissemination of educational materials produced by business.

No written source that identified and described Colorado's educational services.

No central computerized data base for abstracting and retrieving materials related to Colorado Department of Education programs.

No Colorado Department of Education program that offered educational "one stop shopping" for information

AFTER FY 1981

The Colorado Center for Educational Assistance has subcontracted with Mountain Bell to distribute their film and instructional aids and coordinate their lending library and speakers' bureau. The CCEA also disseminates Blue Cross/Blue Shield health films.

Project ACCESS staff organized and published, "A Resource Guide to Educational Services in Colorado".

Several different divisions of the Colorado Department of Education have "bought in" to the Colorado State Library computerized cataloging and retrieval system called the CENTRE File. This has provided national dissemination for many Colorado developed materials.

Project ACCESS was institutionalized as part of the Colorado Department of Education, Community

RESOURCES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

training and technical assistance, human resources, and a lending library.

CDE had two separate lending libraries, one for Career Education and the other for Adult Education.

LINKAGES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

Limited linkages between CDE Office of Field Services and CDE Office of Planning of Development with the CDE State Library

AFTER FY 1981

Based Education Services Unit and was renamed the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance (CCEA). The CCEA offers information, training, and technical assistance, human resources and a lending library.

Both the Career and Adult Education libraries were merged together in one collection as part of the new Colorado Center for Educational Assistance. Also the Health Education and Basic Skills division of CDE will be contracting for library and dissemination services in 1981-82 through the Center.

AFTER FY 1981

Subcontract with the State Library for searches and training. Coordination on CENTRE File development for abstracting and dissemination. Joint planning efforts for information retrieval and dissemination.

LINKAGES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

Limited linkages with other in-state agencies..

No training programs for BOCS and LEA's in information identification and retrieval.

Limited linkages with other State Department of Education state capacity building programs.

AFTER FY 1981

Coordination and cooperation with five in-state agencies in writing a plan for providing services to youth and utilizing the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance as its information and dissemination vehicle. Agencies involved are CDE, Department of Labor, Higher Education, Social Services, and Office of Manpower, Planning and Development.

Provided extensive training to Information Consultants (Field Agents) and gatekeepers in information identification and retrieval.

Coordination and cooperation with other state capacity building projects. Participated in the Dissemination Task Force and the State Dissemination Leadership project.

LINKAGES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

No linkages with business and industry in resource coordination.

No linkage network within the CDE.

No linkage network between CDE and BOCS or LEA's.

Limited linkage network between BOCS and LEA's.

AFTER FY 1981

Coordinated efforts with Mountain Bell and Blue Cross/Blue Shield for dissemination of their educational resources to Colorado educators.

Coordination with Adult Education, Career Education, Health Education, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, Basic Skills, Food and Nutrition, Accountability and Accreditation, State Library, Special Education, Title IX, Field Coordinators, and Planning and Evaluation divisions of the CDE for information sharing and dissemination. CDE Dissemination Advisory Council.

Thirty-two Information Consultants actively participating in linkage efforts at 16 BOCS and the Denver Public Schools.

Information Consultant linkage network in place with school building contacts known as Gatekeepers.

LINKAGES

PRIOR TO FY 1976

Limited linkages between the LEA's and BOCS with the Regional Libraries.

No process model for a linkage system.

Limited coordination with regional and national resource programs.

LEADERSHIP

PRIOR TO FY 1976

No program within CDE for state capacity building efforts.

AFTER FY 1981

Also several Information Consultants will continue their linking efforts with local dollars.

Several LEA's and BOCS have become active members of their respective Regional Libraries. The Regional Libraries provide the computerized searching for the Information Consultants.

The Project ACCESS linkage model which was developed, tested, and proven effective will continue to be utilized by the Information Consultant network. (See Appendix)

Established linkages with the Northwest Regional Lab, McREL, State Facilitator Project, ERIC Clearinghouses, and Office of Rural Education.

AFTER FY 1981

Project ACCESS was institutionalized within the CDE Community

LEADERSHIP

PRIOR TO FY 1976

No coordination between the state level education related agencies in information identification and retrieval.

AFTER FY 1981

Based Education Services Unit.

A three-year plan was developed at the request of the Commissioner of Education for continued support.

Future plans for five state agencies to jointly fund the CCEA as the "one stop shopping" center for the agencies represented with the CDE taking the leading role. Agencies included are CDE, Higher Education, Department of Labor, Social Services, and Office of Manpower Planning and Development.

C. The Degree to Which the Dissemination Program Has Become Institutionalized

During the last half of the fourth year of funding, the staff began to look quite seriously at institutionalizing Project ACCESS. It was decided early during that process that the function rather than the program should be our chief focus for institutionalization.

At about this same time, there was reorganization within the Office of field services that created the Community Based Education Services Unit. The purpose of this new unit was and is to assist Colorado communities, businesses, school districts, government agencies, as well as the private sector in providing for the educational needs identified by people within the community. With this reorganization, Project ACCESS was absorbed within

this new unit and thus institutionalization became reality.

Project ACCESS, Adult Education, Career Education, Community Education, GED Programs, and CETA programs were able to extend their services to Colorado communities as a result of the formation of the unit. In addition, these programs work collaboratively to provide services in the most cost effective method to communities asking for assistance.

Three divisions were created within the unit. One of those divisions included the functions of Project ACCESS, Career Education, and the Career and Adult Education Resource Centers. The staff felt it was important to break ties with former program titles. Thus, we created the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance. The goals centered around assisting people within the communities of Colorado and utilizing the resources of the local community, as well as the State of Colorado and nation to meet the needs of those people. It should be noted that we felt strongly that individual programs need to keep their identities. Further, we felt that the positive elements of each program must be capitalized on in order to cause long term cooperative efforts.

Much of this last year has been spent planning and providing awareness of the new Center. The Unit Director provided the requisite leadership to create a team approach to managing the unit. While the unit was divided by programs it was united by function and a strong desire to illustrate to the Department as well as other state agencies that collaborative arrangements can be created and maintained and can further result in a more comprehensive delivery of services.

Through past contacts, agreements were reached with the Mountain Bell Telephone Company to distribute their educational films and aides. In turn, Mountain Bell provided us with free advertising in their brochure that was distributed to over 2,000 educators in Colorado. This was significant in that it was our first agreement reached for dissemination or

distribution with an agency external to the Department. Since then we have entered into another agreement with Mountain Bell to coordinate the Mountain Bell Speaker's Bureau. The telephone company will again promote this through billing inserts which will reach educators and businesses throughout the metropolitan area.

Further, the Center entered into an agreement with the CETA division of the Community Based Educational Services Unit. CETA dollars supported 2.65 FTE at the Center, provided for the acquisition of new material resources, and supported technical assistance provided to CETA clients by the Center staff. The CETA supervisor coordinated to a great extent with the Center supervisor. This effort was significant in that CETA/education efforts in the past were not always as effective as they potentially could be. The new arrangement coupled with effective leadership caused a more permanent relationship to exist.

Other significant arrangements which contributed to the institutionalization of ACCESS and the Center were with the Title II - Basic Skills program and the Health and Survival Education Unit at CDE. Both of these agreements provided for the dissemination of resources of appropriate clients.

One additional effort which could cause permanence for the Center is the formulation of a position paper which calls for five state agencies charged with providing services to a targeted group of youth, to collaborate in the delivery of resources. The Governor has requested these agencies to work together to satisfy the requirements set out in his Youth Initiative Policy. The Center would act as the vehicle for coordinating the efforts of these agencies as well as for providing information to the agencies and their clients. Inherent in this position paper was a request for additional funding from these agencies. Through a shared funding structure

the Center would be held accountable and responsive to the needs of the participating agencies. This paper is currently in the hands of the agency representatives and subject to discussion and consideration within the next 60 days. If funded, Project ACCESS and the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance will be on solid funding.

This process can be cumbersome in that new territory is being tread upon. There seems to be a reluctance with some parties to share resources or functions. We have met with continued success because we have illustrated to agency and program staff how the Center can be a logical extension of their agency or program. We are not interested in building an empire but rather in providing a quality service to the people of Colorado in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration and with an ultimate reduction in the duplication of effort and a cost savings in the long term.

The program is not on solid ground yet but we feel as if we have made significant strides and will continue to do so.

D. Description of the Way in Which the Project Has Approached Equity Issues

The equity issue can best be addressed by looking at rural schools in Colorado and how the project impacted rural educators and others in rural communities.

Project ACCESS made significant contributions to the availability of human and material resources to rural communities. Approximately 85% of Colorado is designated rural. Eleven of sixteen Project ACCESS field sites were located in rural areas and/or served rurally isolated communities. It is significant to note that one rural mountain site generated 27% of all the Project ACCESS requests for information or resources.

Since ACCESS became part of the Colorado Center for Educational Assistance, we have answered a Request for a Proposal from the National Institute of Education to develop a model for improving educational practices in rural isolated school districts through collaborative planning action among state and local community organizations.

Further, the entire network of field agents and the ACCESS staff participated in a two-day inservice on Title IX/Sex Equity. The Title IX staff at the department provided the field agents with numerous materials to utilize in their respective geographic areas. In addition, each field agent was given a certificate which recognized them as having completed the inservice and designated them as resident Title IX/Sex Equity Resource Persons. Follow-up reporting indicated that several field agents were called upon to facilitate the flow of information and resources related to sex equity issues.

Finally, the Center staff assisted in the development of a proposal which would strengthen the identification and delivery of resources to professionals who work with handicapped students in Colorado. As of this reporting, that proposal is still under consideration.

It is our opinion that Project ACCESS contributed significantly to bringing about a more equitable system for the delivery of information and resources to Colorado educators.

E. Impact of the Program on Improvement of Practice at Various Levels of the Educational Decision-Making Process

Project ACCESS has collected data regarding the improvement of practice on the educational decision-making process by two methods,

(1) case studies, and (2) analysis of case documentation data.

A case study approach was used to investigate the decision-making process and impacts related to ACCESS requests. A total of five sites were selected to represent the variety of ACCESS requests. Results are reported here in the form of a synopsis of each case study and a summary of major findings.

CASE 1: Mountain BOCs

ACCESS services were used to provide information to the school board regarding the optimum length of day for a kindergarten program. Parents favored a full day program, partly because both parents worked. The school administration favored the traditional half-day program because of the extra cost involved in a full-day program. ACCESS provided a computer search, research materials and information from other states. Information provided by ACCESS was used to prepare a report to the school board to present advantages and disadvantages of a full-day program, but generally demonstrating that an extended day program was not harmful to children and that it was actually better than the traditional kindergarten half-day program. The end result was that the school board chose to adopt a full-day kindergarten program on a one-year basis.

CASE 2: Mountain BOCs

ACCESS services were used to obtain information on a K-12 sex education program, at the direction of the school board because of an increasing number of teenage pregnancies. ACCESS provided an extensive computer search, materials, and human resource contact information. The Field Agent oriented the committee to the ACCESS information that was obtained. In addition, the committee also contacted other school districts and agencies, and attended a state-wide Planned Parenthood workshop. The

results were in the adoption of a secondary sex education curriculum, development of a K-5 program. This district has also served as a model for other ACCESS requests.

CASE 3: Denver Public Schools (DPS)

ACCESS services were used by a large metro school district for high school dropout prevention programs. ACCESS provided a variety of research and program information, including information on the symptomology and treatment of dropouts and the psychological impacts of various programs. This information was used by the DPS Holding Power Program committee to develop building level programs, in all high schools in the district. It was found that ACCESS information both reinforced positive actions already taken by the schools as well as helped generate new ideas and approached dropout prevention.

CASE 4: Weld BOCS

ACCESS services were used by a small rural school district to obtain information meeting an accreditation by contract goal. ACCESS provided the superintendent with model needs assessment instruments used by other school districts. The Field Agent assisted with modification of the instruments and in the tabulation of the results. In response to findings on a survey administered to faculty, the Field Agent arranged for a graduate credit course to assist teachers in the selection of tests. In addition, the school district developed a new district-wide testing program.

CASE 5: Northwest BOCS

ACCESS services were used to obtain information for a junior high physical education teacher by a small mountain community to revise the district's physical education curriculum. ACCESS provided a computer

search, research and program materials concerning current trends in physical education curriculum, scope and sequence approaches and sample curriculum guides. A district-wide curriculum was developed which provided greater continuity in physical education activities across grade levels and also reflected a new district philosophy of physical fitness.

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Table 8 (see appendix) presents a summarization of the results obtained from the five case studies. Numbers six and seven show specific results related to the impact of ACCESS services on the decision-making process. A brief summary of the major findings is given below:

- (1) Clients were found to have requested ACCESS services while in the awareness and planning stages of the projects.
- (2) The decision-making processes in which the ACCESS resources were used lasted approximately three to six months. The total change process from the initial identification of the problem to the actual programmatic change requires approximately one to one and a fourth years.
- (3) The resources being provided through ACCESS services, while being used extensively, impact most significantly the local decision-making process. Information from other sources besides ACCESS were used for decision-making such as: teacher, community and administration attitudes and backgrounds.

The following decision-making data was extracted from the Project ACCESS Field Agent case documentation forms from September 1977 through July 1978.

Table II shows consistency with the findings in Table I in which the primary impact was on the students. It appears that the impact was felt most heavily in the areas of curriculum and instruction (54%). The

remaining impact was felt relatively evenly across the other categories.

SUMMARY

It can be generalized from all cases that ACCESS played a major role in the decision-making processes which have had significant impacts upon improving the quality of education in local school districts throughout Colorado.

F. What We Have Learned About Dissemination

Prior to Project ACCESS, there was no process model for dissemination of information to Colorado school districts and BOCS. Initially, the project acted as a "linker" between school districts in four regional pilot sites and three major resource systems, including ERIC, the Colorado State Facilitator, and the CDE Talent Bank. Gradually the number of sites was increased to seventeen, and the projects' functions and activities were expanded accordingly. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the leadership of Project ACCESS changed several times. Each time the change occurred the Project had a slight pause or even regression. Even with this lack of continuity of leadership, Project ACCESS emerged as a fairly effective dissemination system.

At the end of five years, the staff of the project has identified the following characteristics essential for developing an effective system of dissemination and linkage between local, regional, and state education agencies and major resource systems.

- Continuity of leadership
- Strong linking network between national organization, state education agency, BOCS, regional libraries, and local education agencies at the beginning of the project

- Continuous training of all involved in project
- Anticipation of needs
- Constant "advertising of services"
- Quick response to requests
- Personal follow-up
- Early planning of future funding needs and sources
- Hiring of qualified staff

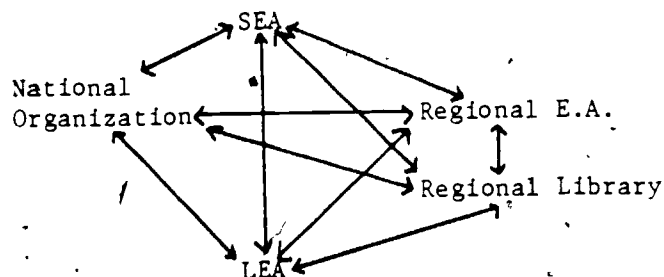
Continuity of leadership

Project ACCESS suffered several delays due to changes in project leadership. Leadership is extremely crucial!

The project staff believes that Project ACCESS would have been even more successful had there been less turnover in project staff, especially supervisory personnel.

Strong linking network between national organization, state education agency, regional education system, regional libraries, and local education agencies at the beginning of project

The key "players" must be identified prior to beginning the project. All must be involved in the entire development and including planning and implementation so that all involved develop a sense of ownership and commitment to the project. Communication among all involved must be two way. Each agency must be aware of its own role as well as the roles of the other agencies.



Continuous training of all involved in project

All those anticipating involvement with the dissemination project must receive initial training in the skills needed according to their area of operation. Similarly, such training must be provided for personnel who are added to the project staff.

- The information consultants (field agents) serving the districts, must receive training in consultation skills, resource retrieval, and the "mechanics" of the specific project.
 - The people at the local level requesting information must receive training in the process/procedure involved in obtaining information as well as the type of information available.
 - Those responsible for locating the resources for dissemination must receive training in resource identification, consultation skills, and resource retrieval as well as in the procedural operation of the project.
- This training must continue throughout the life of the project if the project is to (1) keep up-to-date, (2) expand, (3) change any of the players, or (4) add additional staff. Training must be planned, systematic, on-going, and include all those involved at all levels.

Anticipation of needs

In order for dissemination to be beneficial to those requesting information or resources the staff must be knowledgeable about what trends are developing in the state or region, what issues might be facing the LEA's involved in a dissemination project, what education trends might be developing locally, regionally, or nationally. Resources identification (material, human, and physical) must be accomplished as the trends or needs are developing in order for the program to be effective. The staff of a dissemination project must be very much aware of what is happening in the state and nation and then apply this knowledge to the dissemination process.

Constant "advertising of services"

The project must be continuously "advertised" as to its availability and operational procedures. The staff must communicate with those past, present and potential users of the system. Brochures or newsletters outlining operational procedures, resources available, and personal contacts of staff helps the project to be a "live" entity. Word of mouth is the best advertiser. When one teacher/requestor has had a positive experience it will be shared with others. These others then request information.

Quick response to requests

Whenever information is requested the dissemination of such information must be quick. If "turn-around" time is too long, information requested may be useless to the person requesting it. People will not use a dissemination project if it does not meet their needs, timewise as well as information-wise.

Personal follow-up

In all stages of the dissemination process, personal contact is extremely important. People are generally hesitant to request information from a machine or unknown person. They like to contact a "known" person. This personal contact is also important at the other end of the dissemination process. The information consultants learned that by contacting the requestor after they received the information, the staff could learn about any changes that should be made to improve the program. Additionally, the person receiving the information felt that they were a "being" and not just a request and were more likely to reuse the program.

Early planning of future funding needs and sources

A major difficulty faced by Project ACCESS was planned LEA financial participation in project. The future funding base of a dissemination project must be anticipated and planned for early in the operation of the project. A determination must be made by all those involved very early in the project as to how the project will be funded in its continuity. LEAs must pay their fair share if the project is to serve them. This sharing must be recognized and agreed to very early in a project's operation.

Hiring of qualified staff

Project ACCESS learned that it was beneficial if the information consultants had some experience in library services or resource identification. If not, the project must train the consultants in resource identification and retrieval and other skills associated with the dissemination of information.

Prior to hiring any staff, those responsible for developing the program must determine what skills, expertise, and personal characteristics are essential to each job position. By knowing what is needed for each position and, then, hiring accordingly, the project is off to a positive beginning without having to devote unnecessary time and money to staff training.

Summary

During the five years of this project (1976-1981), Project ACCESS developed a process model for disseminating information to Colorado school districts and BOCS, utilizing information consultants (field agents) located in 17 BOCS and the Denver Public Schools. The staff of Project

ACCESS has identified several characteristics they feel essential for developing a strong system of information dissemination including:

- Continuity of leadership
- Strong linkage network
- Continuous training of all involved in the project
- Anticipation of needs
- Constant advertising of services
- Quick response to requests
- Personal follow-up
- Early planning of future funding needs and sources
- Hiring of qualified staff

APPENDIX

Table 1

Decision Will Have Primary Impact On					
Category Label	Code	Absolute Freq	Relative Freq (Pct)	Adjusted Freq (Pct)	Cum Freq (Pct)
Students	1	395	63.5	67.5	67.5
Teachers	2	72	11.6	12.3	79.8
Administration	3	39	6.3	6.7	86.5
Other	4	79	12.7	13.5	100.0
	999	37	5.7	Missing	
Total		622	100.0	100.0	

Valid Cases 585 Missing Cases 37

Table I clearly shows that the impact of decisions facilitated by ACCESS services impact heavily on students. In about two-thirds of the cases students received the primary impact of those decisions and in an additional 12% classroom teachers received the primary impact.

Table II

Area Most Impacted by Decision

Category Label	Code	Absolute Freq	Relative Freq (Pct)	Adjusted Freq (Pct)	Cum Freq (Pct)
	0	1	.2	.2	.2
Curriculum, instruct.	1	317	51.0	53.5	53.7
Administration	2	25	4.0	4.2	57.9
Organizational Devel	3	46	7.4	7.8	65.7
Staff Development	4	27	4.3	4.6	70.3
School Climate Impr	5	44	7.1	7.4	77.7
Accountability-Eval	6	49	7.9	8.3	86.0
Counselling	7	18	2.9	3.0	89.0
Other	8	65	10.5	11.0	99.0
	999	30	4.8	Missing	
Total		622	100.0	100.0	

Valid Cases 592 Missing Cases 30

TABLE 8

Case Study Results

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
1. Stage of Client*					
a. Initial stage	Planning	Awareness	Awareness	Planning	Planning
b. Current stage	Trial/Evaluation	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation
2. Awareness of ACCESS					
a. How did awareness come about?	Prior Usage	Gatekeeper	Personal Association with Agent	Prior Usage	Presentation
b. How was ACCESS contacted?	Board Member contacted Field Agent	Counselor contacted Field Agent	Director contacted Field Agent	Superintendent contacted Field Agent	Assistant Principal contacted Field Agent
3. Resources Received					
a. Computer search	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
b. Microfiche	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
c. Hard copy journal article	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
d. Curriculum/program materials	No	No	No	Course to be taught by Agent	No
e. Name of resource person	No	State Department	No	Field Agent	No
f. Other resources	No	No	No	Sample surveys from other districts	No
4. Service Received					
a. Personal contact by phone or visit	Minimal	Visit/Phone	Visit/Phone	Visit/Phone	Visit/Phone
b. Mail only	Yes	No	No	No	No
c. Client's overall evaluation of service*	Good/Excellent	Good/Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
5. Use of Materials*					
a. Extent used	High	High	High	High	High
b. Overall usefulness	Somewhat	Somewhat/High	Minimal/Somewhat	High	High

*Scales used by observer: Item 1 - Awareness, Planning, Trial/Evaluation and Adoption/Implementation (4 stages)
 Item 4(c) - Poor, Low, Good, Excellent (4 point scale)
 Item 5 - Minimal, Somewhat, High (3 point scale)

TABLE 8

Case Study Results (Continued)

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
6. Impact of decision-making process*					
a. Affect on decision	Significant	Significant	Minimal	Highly Significant	Significant
b. Role of other factors	Highly Significant	Highly Significant	Highly Significant	Highly Significant	Minimal
- Community	Significant	Significant	Highly Significant	Highly Significant	Highly Significant
- School Administration	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
- Teaching staff	Minimal	Minimal	Not known	Highly Significant	Minimal
- Background and personal preference of requestor	Highly Significant	Significant	Highly Significant	Highly Significant	Highly Significant
7. Impacts of decision on*	Highly Significant	Highly Significant	Significant	Highly Significant	Significant
a. Objectives	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
b. Structure	Minimal - 1 Aide	Minimal - 1 Teacher	Minimal - 1 Administrator	Minimal	Minimal
c. Facilities	None	None	Minimal	None	Minimal
d. Curriculum	Significant	Highly Significant	Significant (per school)	Highly Significant (Future)	Highly Significant
e. Materials	Significant	Significant	Significant	Highly Significant	Somewhat
f. Staff	Highly Significant	Significant	Significant	Highly Significant	Somewhat
g. Student behavior	Significant	Minimal (at this time)	Unknown	None	Significant
h. Other	Increased cost (= \$10,000)	-	-	Cost	New building will be affected
8. Time factors					
a. Information in time to meet needs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
b. How long was decision-making process	Approximately 1/2 year	Approximately 3 months	Approximately 3 months	Approximately 4 months	Approximately 3 months
c. How long from the beginning of problem or need to actual change	Fall 1977-Fall 1978 1 year	June 1977-Fall 1978 1 1/4 years	June 1977-Fall 1978 1 1/4 years	Fall 1978-Fall 1979 1 year	Fall 1978-Fall 1979 1 year